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# **General Services Operations Study**

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Roadmap for Recovery

Prepared by Rick Masson    September 2010

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## Section

# 1

## Introduction

This is a study of the operations of the General Services Division including recommendations for the future success of the Division responsibilities.

The General Services Division has an employee complement of three-hundred and fifty (350) and is responsible for maintenance and repair of buildings and vehicles owned and operated by the City of Memphis, printing and copying, real estate acquisition, and vehicle impound lot. The Division utilizes an Internal Service Fund to bill all individual City Divisions for printing and copying services and for the repair and service of City vehicles.

Two recently completed studies of Fleet Management identified numerous areas of needed improvement. The first was an audit conducted by Thompson Dunavant, PLC, which found serious deficiencies in the control structure of Fleet Management that could result in misstatements or inefficiencies. A total of sixty-eight (68) deficiencies were identified and of those forty-one percent (41%) were related to insufficient monitoring. The second was a review by the City Attorney's office regarding allegations of fraud with the tire repair contractor, Around Town Tire, which found serious violations of the City's procurement policies and procedures including non-compliance with City insurance requirements, not maintaining proper facilities and equipment to repair tires, use of City employees to fulfill contract obligations, unavailability of invoices, overcharges to make repairs, and employee incompetence. A follow-up study by the City Attorney's office found additional contractual infractions including making purchases outside the scope of the contracts and falsifying invoices to make purchases outside the scope of the contracts.

During the engagement of this study several high level Fleet Management employees have left the City through retirement including Arthur Adams, Fleet Service Administrator, John Love, Fleet Services Manager, Andrew Phillips, Fleet Services Manager, and Annette Clay, Vehicle Support Manager.

## General Services Current Operations

The mission of General Services is to provide maintenance and repair for buildings and vehicles and other crucial support services for the Administration, City Divisions, and other governmental organizations in a cost effective and efficient manner to assist them in accomplishing the City's mission.

General Services Administration provides management, direction and administrative support to the General Services service centers by monitoring, coordinating and

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evaluating budget expenditures, capital equipment purchases, and capital improvement projects to help them achieve their goals and objectives.

Property Maintenance provides customers with maintenance and repair; administers warranties for City facilities and reviews, comments and makes recommendations on all plans regarding construction and major repairs, and provides an aggressive preventive maintenance program focusing on customer needs.

Real Estate assists the Administration, other divisions, agencies and/or service centers in providing analyses involving feasibility studies, preparation of land valuations and direction in accomplishing possible projects; acquiring real property or interests in real property including leasing of land improvements and management of real property; and sale of excess or tax-delinquent city parcels.

The Operation of City Hall provides a safe, clean and comfortable environment for employees and visitors to City Hall, and provides timely, efficient, quality service to employees inside City Hall.

The Vehicle Impound Lot operates two vehicle impound sites at 465 Klinke and 45 South Flicker in order to provide secure storage of vehicles to law enforcement so that they can have proper disposal procedures and return property to the rightful owners. For a vehicle to be impounded at the Vehicle Impound Lot a police officer must request that a vehicle be towed to the lot. For Fiscal Year 2010 the Impound lot stored over 13,185 vehicles during the year.

Printing/Mail is the centralized operation that provides printing and mail services to City government agencies.

Fleet Management provides centralized fleet and fuel acquisition and maintenance and repairs to over 6000 City vehicles and equipment. There are 180 employees working in 14 shop locations.

## **Review of Previous Reports**

Since 2002 the General Services Division has been the subject of eleven previous studies of its operations. Several of the reviews found major deficiencies and identified areas in need of improvement including:

- Controls needed to ensure accountability for parts purchased in Fleet Maintenance needed improvement. There is not a clear audit trail to track non-stock inventory parts. Non-stock parts are purchased and received into inventory, however they are charged out as direct commercial parts instead of non-stock parts.
- Contract compliance and administration for the Around Town Tire contract needed improvement. During the inventory review management could not provide a current inventory of tires stored at Around Town Tire. The vendor provided services outside of the hours allowed by the contract.
- As much as a 7% error rate in inventory counts at Fleet Maintenance.

- Internal controls over handling of cash and checks for reimbursements for uniform shirts and pagers at Property Maintenance are poor and provide little assurance that all revenues will be deposited with the City Treasurer.
- The physical existence of all equipment cannot be verified with acceptable degree of reliability at Property Maintenance.

## Review of Finances

Total expenditures for the General Services Division, General Fund, have grown from \$8.1 million in FY 2007 to budgeted expenses of \$12.6 million in the FY 2011. However, since FY 2007 the Division added the Impound Lot to its budget. Excluding the Impound Lot the FY 2011 General Fund GS budget is \$9.7 million or about a 20% increase over the four years. This is also not the full picture because it includes charges to other divisions in the form of Expense Recoveries which have doubled since FY 2007 from \$1.54 million to \$3.04 million in the 2011 Budget. These Expense Recoveries mask the true growth in expenditures. As can be seen in Table 1, Full Time Salaries have grown 36% from FY 2007 to FY 2011 or at an annual rate of over 8%. Material and Supplies expenses have grown close to the same rate, 31%.

City Shop charges from Fleet Maintenance have also double since 2007 (see Table 2).

**Table 1: General Services Division Expenses (excluding Internal Service Fund, Expense Recoveries and Impound Lot)**

Item	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2011 Budget	% of Growth FY2007- 2011
FT Salaries	\$4,376,468	\$5,937,320	36%
M&S	3,357,194	4,382,427	31%

**Table 2: Fleet Maintenance Charges for Services**

Item	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2011 Budget	% Change FY 2007 – 2010
Charges for Services	\$15,860,097	\$32,673,265	202%

## Section

# 2

## Findings and Recommendations

### Division Realignment

Interviews were conducted with twenty-two (22) mid and upper level management employees. There was a general feeling of poor morale across the board. Several employees of Fleet Management shared past practices of intimidation by senior management or support personnel.

The following are some of the areas of concern from these interviews:

- Limited involvement of front line supervisors in hiring decisions.
- Fleet Services staff expressed concerns with the storeroom inventory and their access to parts.
- Sporadic performance appraisals (none for representative employees).
- There is a general reluctance to outsource work even in cases where work orders are backed-up and outsource contracts already exist.
- Limited involvement of Managers or Supervisors in promotional decisions.
- Little or no benchmarking with other cities.
- Not enough technical training provided for Crafts and Mechanics.
- Performance reporting systems are adequate but are not utilized fully to provide useful data.
- Some building structures are antiquated.
- No time clocks in any areas.
- Very little planning of work.
- Widespread perception of nepotism in Fleet Maintenance and to some degree in Property Maintenance.
- Nearly all indicated that they had a good relationship with their customers; nearly all also indicated that their customers are unhappy with turnaround time on their work orders.

- There are redundant layers of management and administrative functions.

## **Recommendations**

General Services lacks a modern and professional approach to management. These issues go beyond whether to keep the work in-house or not. There has not been sufficient attention devoted to fleet operations and the control of fleet assets has been ineffective. Performance measures are meaningless at best and non-existent at worst. The following steps should be taken immediately:

- Reorganize the Division in order to eliminate redundant layers of management and administrative functions.
- New policies should be developed to strengthen controls governing the high risk areas of operation.
- Designate a procurement specialist to expedite and control contracts.
- Install time clocks for hourly employees.
- Seek professional assistance from a Search Consultant in the hiring of a new Fleet Administrator.
- Improve the accuracy and consistency of the performance measures.
- Incorporate performance measures into job descriptions and promotion requirements.
- Review all employee records to ensure the city's nepotism policy is enforced.
- Enhance technical training for crafts and mechanics and encourage professional certification where appropriate.
- Interface the current fleet information system M5 with the City's Oracle financial system.
- Provide General Services' employees with formal training for policy awareness to ensure full compliance with established policy.

## **Fleet Maintenance out-sourcing**

Fleet Maintenance is responsible for maintaining over six thousand (6000) vehicles (see table 1). While this function is essential to the operation of City government, it is not necessarily a core competency of City government. Recent events and past studies have demonstrated this fact in a very dramatic way. Many local governments are moving to out-sourcing non core services in order to reap substantial savings and improve performance. Out-sourcing can result in substantial savings. Out-sourcing objectives should be clearly defined up front. They should include long-term operational savings in the range of 5% to

15% and take advantage of the latest technological developments in the private sector. Using the 5% to 15% cost savings range and given the Fleet Management budget for FY 2011 of \$32,681,549 this translates to an estimated savings of between \$1.6 million and \$4.9 million per year.

**Table 3: Fleet Inventory**

Division	Light	Heavy	Total
Police Services	2540	376	2916
General Services	145	272	417
HCD/MHA	96	48	144
Fire Services	197	85	282
Community Enhancement	100	101	201
Parks Service	130	811	941
Engineering	42	59	101
Public Works	228	941	1169
Executive	10	21	31
Public Services	35	33	68
Human Resources	3	0	3
Legal	4	0	4
Information Systems	6	1	7
Total	3536	2748	6284

Effective contract management will require a new set of skills for General Services. GS will need to maintain their awareness of the fleet repair market in order to communicate with the contractor on equal terms. In addition, the contract should identify the service, reporting requirements, service quality measures, and complaint procedures. The contract should specify performance based incentives and fines. To ensure that service levels and costs remain competitive, the City should hold regular re-bidding competitions.

In a report by the United States General Accounting Office on Privatization the following observations were made about successful out-sourcing<sup>1</sup>:

Privatization can best be introduced and sustained when there is a committed political leader to champion it.

Governments need to establish an organizational and analytical structure to implement the privatization effort. This structure can include commissions, staff offices, and analytical frameworks for privatization decision making.

Governments may need to enact legislative changes and/or reduce resources available to government agencies in order to encourage greater use of privatization.

<sup>1</sup> United States General Accounting Office, March 1997 Privatization: Lessons Learned by State and Local Governments.

Reliable and complete cost data on government activities are needed to assess the overall performance of activities targeted for privatization, to support informed privatization decisions, and to make these decisions easier to implement and justify to potential critics.

Governments need to develop strategies to help their workforces make the transition to a private-sector environment.

When a government's direct role in the delivery of services is reduced through privatization, a need is created for enhanced monitoring and oversight that evaluates compliance with the terms of the privatization agreement and evaluates performance in delivering services to ensure that the government's interests are fully protected.

## **Recommendation**

Recent events in General Services have profoundly demonstrated that fleet maintenance is not a core competency of city government. In light of these events the City must investigate alternative means to provide for the repair and maintenance of city vehicles and equipment in the most efficient manner possible. Out-sourcing fleet maintenance is a viable alternative to the current methods. The best way for the City to solicit vehicle maintenance proposals would be to issue a request for proposals (RFP). The RFP should be specific in terms of outcomes desired, but it should remain open-ended as to how these outcomes are achieved. As the City is under stress to close a considerable deficit, the sooner it acts to start the competitive bidding process, the sooner it will be able to realize savings and use them to balance the budget and avoid program cuts in other areas. In order to move this process forward the City should perform the following:

- Establish an out-sourcing committee made up of representatives of user divisions, City Attorney's Office, Finance Division, private citizens, and General Services' management.
- Collect and properly document fleet composition.
- Establish accurate and precise performance measures.
- Establish criteria for selection.
- Consider hiring professional assistance from an experienced fleet services out-sourcing consultant.

The following is a potential schedule of completion for out-sourcing and fleet inventory:

- |                                  |                  |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| 1) Organize Out-Source Committee | October 1, 2010  |
| 2) Establish Selection Criteria  | November 1, 2010 |



3) RFP Release Date	November 15, 2010
4) Pre-Proposal Conference	November 22, 2010
5) Tour of Maintenance Facilities	November 22, 2010
6) Written Inquires Due	November 29, 2010
7) Responses Forwarded	December 10, 2010
8) Proposal Due Date	January 10, 2011
9) Complete Evaluation	January 28, 2011
10) Complete Negotiation	February 18, 2011
11) Award Contract	February 25, 2011
12) Transition Process	March – April, 2011
13) Contract Start Date	April 25, 2011

## Stakeholder Relations

Interviews were conducted with over twenty-five (25) representatives from the Divisions of Police, Fire, Parks, and Public Works. The interviews provided an opportunity to learn first hand the perceptions of General Services' success at meeting customer expectations. Customer opinion was quite negative regarding Fleet Maintenance. The following is a summary of their comments:

- Slow turn-around time
- Inconsistent communications
- Repeat repairs with no warranty on work
- Poor customer relations
- Indecision on minor issues causes major delays
- Services provided are not cost effective
- Over or double billing
- Non-competitive repair costs

The increased vehicle downtime has caused some divisions to hold on to vehicles targeted for disposal in order to have back-up vehicles on hand for spares to ensure their

ability to deliver services to their customers. This behavior adds to the fleet costs for both capital and maintenance.

Customer opinion of Property Maintenance was more positive. However, there were a number of complaints about work orders not being complete in a timely fashion or lost in the system.

In 2009 the City changed the process to purchase vehicles. Prior to 2009 the Division which operated the vehicles prepared the specifications for the purchase of vehicles. After 2009 General Services wrote specifications for vehicles (except Fire apparatus) and issued bid documents for purchase. Several Divisions expressed great concern over the change in procedure. There was real concern that these Divisions would lose control over important equipment, making it more difficult for them to meet their service demands. In addition, in the spring of 2010, 150 police vehicles were accepted with carpeting in the rear cabinet. Carpeting in the rear cabinet of a Police vehicle causes long term problems due to the nature of Police work. In the Parks division, ten lawn mowers which did not meet contract specifications were accepted and put into service as meeting specifications by General Services.

Fleet Maintenance functions as an internal service fund. Its operating expenses are charged back to the Divisions that use its services. The "revenue" that it earns is based on charging the user Divisions the maintenance and repair services that it provides to the user fleet. Fleet customers do not understand the makeup of the hourly charge rate or the surcharge placed on parts and commercial work. The main purpose of the "Charge Back" system at Fleet Maintenance is to monitor productivity and provide accountability. It is a costly and cumbersome system to maintain but if used properly the savings outweigh the costs. Clearly the system is not working. Very few of the Divisions feel that their "billings" are accurate. In addition, excessive tire repair charges over several years were ignored or overlooked.

## **Recommendations**

General Services should improve relations with the City Divisions. The City Division personnel were dissatisfied with several areas within General Services related to: charges for services, communication, repair and maintenance turn-around time, quality of maintenance work, and responsiveness to complaints. Communications was the number one concern of the division personnel. In order to repair customer relations General Services must adopt the following:

- Suspend the current charge back system of operation at Fleet Maintenance until greater integrity can be incorporated into charges (see service agreements below).
- Form an advisory committee made up of General Services employees and customers to discuss service level issues.
- Develop service level agreements with the user divisions.
- Provide consistent, accurate, and user-friendly performance reports and customer billing reports.

- Provide up-to-date reporting on vehicle and building work order status.
- Establish procedures to receive merchandise and vehicles that ensure consistency with contract or purchase order specifications.
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of General Services and the user divisions.
- Focus attention on the priorities of the customers.
- Conduct annual surveys with input from the divisions and share the results of these surveys city-wide.
- Return the authority to specify and purchase vehicles to the division responsible for operating the vehicle.
- Allow divisions to out-source some back-logged repairs immediately.

## **Interim Actions**

### **U. S. Communities Government Purchasing Alliance**

U.S. Communities is a national government purchasing cooperative, providing world class government procurement resources and solutions to local and government agencies, school districts, higher education institutions, and nonprofits looking for the best overall supplier of government pricing. Most local agencies may piggyback on a contract competitively bid by another public agency, thereby eliminating the need to re-bid. Through the buying power of large government purchasers in the U.S. Communities program, all local government agencies receive access to excellent pricing and contract terms. U.S. Communities offers local agencies.<sup>2</sup>

- Competitively bid contracts by a lead local agency
- Most favorable local agency pricing
- No cost to participate
- National sponsorship by leading associations and purchasing organizations
- The aggregate purchasing power of public agencies nationwide
- Management by public purchasing professionals

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Communities Government Purchasing Alliance, U.S. Communities 2033 North Main Street, Suite 700 Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

AutoZone has an agreement with U.S. Communities to provide auto parts through the purchasing cooperative. Product categories include under hood (engine, engine management, emissions, air conditioning, heating, cooling systems, belts and hoses), under car (chassis, suspension and ride control), transmissions, drive axles, friction products (brakes, steel, pads, rotors and brake hardware), automotive chemicals and fluids (oil, antifreeze and lubricants). The City of Memphis is a member of the U.S. Communities Government Purchasing Alliance.

### **ASE Certification**

The independent, non-profit National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) was established in 1972 to improve the quality of vehicle repair and service through the voluntary testing and certification of technicians and other automotive service professionals. ASE also encourages and assists in the development of automotive training programs.

At present, about 385,000 professionals hold current certifications nationwide. They work in every segment of the automotive service industry: car and truck dealerships, independent garages, fleets, service stations, franchises, and more.

ASE's tests are industry-driven and are grouped into specialties that cover virtually every vehicle service segment. The exams stress knowledge of job-related skills. Certification consists of passing at least one specialty test and documenting two years of relevant work experience. To maintain certification, those with ASE credentials must be retested every five years.<sup>3</sup>

The City historically has not supported ASE certifications of its mechanics. Currently only 3 mechanics have at least one ASE certification. Louisville, Kentucky has over 24 ASE certified mechanics. Nashville has 25 and Fort Worth, Texas has over 80% of their mechanics certified.

## **Recommendation**

### **Parts Contracts**

Delays in implementing new parts contracts have caused delays in vehicle repairs in Police and other areas. In addition, general mistrust in General Services contracting procedures due to recent events necessitates a legitimate process. The U.S. Communities Government Purchasing Alliance provides the perfect solution. AutoZone provides auto parts through the U.S. Communities purchasing cooperative. With corporate headquarters in Memphis AutoZone is in the perfect match for providing low cost vehicle parts to the City of Memphis. **The City should enter into an agreement under this nationally recognized program as soon as possible.**

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<sup>3</sup> National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence 101 Blue Seal Drive, S.E, Suite 101, Leesburg, VA 20175

### **ASE Certification**

Create a Master Mechanic Certified position with the following Job functions and qualifications:

**ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:** Analyzes, maintains, repairs, and rebuilds a variety of automotive, diesel and turf equipment (light and heavy), and related parts and units; examines vehicle and /or equipment to determine nature and extent of damage or malfunction; removes, disassembles, and inspects units, such as engines, transmissions, etc.; repairs, overhauls, and replaces parts, such as carburetors, fuel injectors, alternators, distributors, pumps, pistons, rods, bearings, etc.; repairs and rewires electrical systems, such as ignition systems, lights, etc.; adjusts brakes, aligns front end, and replaces shock absorbers; and repairs/replaces hydraulic components as needed. Provides technical and safety instruction to personnel assigned to assist in the performance of assigned tasks. Road tests vehicles before and after repairs. May perform brake lathe and tire balancing tasks. Ensures that proper service is maintained. Completes work order and parts requests. Maintains tools, equipment and shop area clean and orderly.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:** Must have four (4) years as Master Mechanic/Apprentice or have equivalent experience/training through a nationally recognized organization or any combination of experience or training which enables one to perform the essential job functions. Working knowledge of the techniques and methods used in the repair and maintenance of gasoline and diesel powered vehicles. Working knowledge of the basic theory, operation, and maintenance of internal combustion engines, transmissions, carburetors, and other systems. Knowledge of departmental policies and procedures. Working knowledge of occupational hazards and preventive safety measures. Skill in using tools and diagnostic equipment. Ability to set up, operate, and analyze data and diagnose from both manual and automated sophisticated equipment. Ability to diagnose mechanical problems and determine appropriate maintenance and repair work, using manufacturer shop manuals, schematics and wiring diagrams. Ability to accurately complete work orders and parts requests. Certification by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (A.S. E.) in the following four (4) specialized areas.

A1 - Engine Repair

A4 – Suspension and Steering

A5 – Brakes

A6 – Electrical/ Electronic Systems

## Impound Lot

The Vehicle Impound Lot has been a Service Center of General Services for three years. It operates two sites at 465 Klinker and 45 South Flicker. For Fiscal Year 2010 the Impound lot stored over 13,185 during the year. The purpose of the impound lot is to provide secure storage of vehicles to law enforcement so that they can maintain the integrity of evidence, have proper disposal procedures, and return property to the rightful owners. Vehicles stored at the Lot include vehicles towed for:

- Criminal investigation
- Involvement in traffic accidents
- Vehicle abandonment
- Violation of City ordinance

During a physical review of the Lot it was discovered that the automated camera system that was designed to monitor the lot was in great disrepair.

A Business Review had been conducted by the City's Information System area to introduce office automation but it had not been implemented.

A quick review of other impound lots across the region found that most impound lots are the responsibility of the Police (see below).

**Table 4: Impound Lot Benchmark**

<u>City</u>	<u>Division Responsible</u>
Nashville	Police
Chattanooga	Police
Knoxville	Fleet Services
Louisville	Police
Birmingham	Police

### Recommendation

An upgrade of the Lot's office automation software would significantly improve the processes at the Impound Lot. It would reduce the potential for human error and increase efficiency.

In addition, repair or replacement of the camera monitoring system should be a high priority for the City.

The continuity of evidence is critically important in a criminal investigation and prosecution. Obviously other cities in this area and across the country recognize this and for that

reason they have placed responsibility of the Impound Lot with their Police authority. There is no synergy or economy of scale in placing the Impound Lot within the General Services Division. **The City should return responsibility for its Impound Lot to the Police Division.**

## **Real Estate Management**

According to the FY 2011 Operating Budget the City owns over 900 structures with over 12 million square feet of space. The only documentation supporting these numbers is a Facility Code Book from the Property Maintenance Center. A review of this document indicates that many of the items listed as structures are in fact not buildings. In addition, there is not a citywide, strategic real estate planning function, nor does the city utilize citywide standards for space utilization or condition.

Real estate is an extremely valuable asset for the City of Memphis. The City has a responsibility to maximize its real estate portfolio in terms of utilization and economic value. That obligation is not being met under the current structure.

## **Recommendations**

Consideration should be given to restructuring the Real Estate Office under the City Engineer. Most of the functions of the Real Estate office are directly related to the City Engineer's functions. By capitalizing on synergies of these offices it gives the City the opportunity to establish a citywide, strategic space planning unit that ensures investment in real estate and serves the needs of the City in an efficient manner. This oversight unit will monitor and benchmark space utilization through surveys and site visits and should eventually produce an annual office space report with recommendations to improve efficiency.

Additionally the City should conduct a space utilization survey with City employees and require each division to provide a report on the amount of office space it currently utilizes. Use this information as the basis for a facility condition assessment and condition analysis study composed of, (1), a general facility conditions assessment (employee and division input) and (2), a detailed facility conditions analysis (new Real Estate unit augmented by outside sources as needed). The Study should also provide suggestions and improvements to the prevention or maintenance practices for each facility. The objectives of the assessment are to:

- Provide a basis for forecasting funding requirements for capital planning
- Provide a base line for setting priorities for the maintenance, repair, enhancement or replacement of facilities and their component systems.
- Gather building system information for the development of a computerized maintenance management system.

## **Whistle Blower System**

The unethical actions that occurred in Fleet Maintenance may have been detected earlier if the City had established a Whistle Blower system to allow employees to anonymously report such abuses. Confidential reports can be filed via the Internet or by calling a toll-free hotline that is answered by live operators. Concerns to report include:

- Questionable Accounting/Auditing Practices
- Fraud/Deceit and Embezzlement
- Conflict of Interest
- Theft
- Unsafe Workplace
- Falsification of Information
- Unethical Business Practices
- Sexual Harassment
- Racial Discrimination
- Violation of Policies and Procedures

Under U.S. law a whistle blower is an employee who tells on an employer because he or she reasonably believes that the employer committed an illegal act. Protection is provided by the Federal acts and related statutes that shield employees from retaliation such as discharge, demotion, suspension or harassment. The employee is still entitled to protection after investigation revealed no laws were broken.

### **Recommendation**

The City should enter into a contract with an independent Whistle Blower system provider for employees to anonymously report abuses such as those that have occurred in Fleet Maintenance. The system should include the following features:

- Silent Alert feature which allows employees and customers to anonymously alert management of illegal/unethical activities occurring within the City government, such as fraud, theft, discrimination, harassment, etc. Once the alert is submitted, the designated City Representative will receive an email stating the new has been submitted. All details, investigative action, and communications regarding the alert are stored in the system database.
- Feature which allows an on-line, anonymous employee suggestion box.



- Awareness materials including posters and employee cards.
- Staff available to answer hotline calls from employees and citizens 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

MLG&W has such a Whistle Blower system in place, and the City could simply piggy-back on this system.

## **Sustainable Practices**

General Services' strategic plan for sustainable practices includes the following:

- Install controls that conserve energy
- Partner with MLGW and TVA in conservation programs
- Reduce waste through lights, heating, and cooling systems
- Practice fuel conservation
- Use equipment that conserves fuel
- Implementing energy conservation mechanisms
- Employing alternative fuel systems in city fleet

The City currently owns seven flexible-fuel vehicles (FFV). FFV is an alternative fuel vehicle with an engine designed to run on more than one fuel, usually gasoline blended with either ethanol or methanol fuel.

## **Recommendations**

Implement additional procurement policies and practices to advance the City's sustainability efforts including:

- Include a minimum efficiency standard in miles per gallon for each vehicle class for which the City has procurement specifications and include such a standard in any new vehicle procurement specification.
- Review all vehicle/equipment specifications and modify as necessary to ensure that:
  - The most fuel efficient vehicles possible are being purchased

- The bid specifications are written in a manner flexible enough to allow the purchase of alternative fuel or hybrid vehicles when possible
- Specifications for off-road equipment/vehicles are also written in a way that favors green options when available
- Develop a pamphlet on fuel conservation and emissions reduction to distribute citywide. It should address driver behavior that will help conserve fuel and save money.
- Review the fleet inventory to identify older vehicles that are used infrequently (or not at all), as well as those vehicles that are disproportionately inefficient, and schedule their elimination or replacement.
- Implement an anti-idling policy prohibiting employees from idling vehicles for an excessive period of time.
- Implement an incentive program for employees to drive efficiently and utilize efficient vehicle operating techniques.